REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The abstract has been amended to reduce the length thereof. The terms and phrases: "The disclosure concerns", "The disclosure defined by this invention" and "The disclosure describes" are not used in the abstract.

Claims 1 - 19, 21-26 and 28 - 36 remain pending in the application.

Claims 20 and 27 have been cancelled.

Claims 1, 17, and 26 have been amended.

The rejection of claims 1 - 4, 7, 12 - 20 and 25 - 36 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Syvanne (US 7,146,421) is respectfully traversed.

As set out in the specification at page 1 *et seq*, the problem solved by the invention is to provide a low-cost router that is flexible, and scaleable in routing capacity and port counts. The specification at pages 1 - 9 provides an extensive discussion of prior art attempts and approaches to solve this problem. The solution provided by Syvanne falls in these prior art solutions.

Syvanne is directed to handling state information in a network element cluster and state information is defined in col. 2, lines 35-61 of Syvanne; and Fig. 2 discloses the basic flow chart which is reproduced as follows:

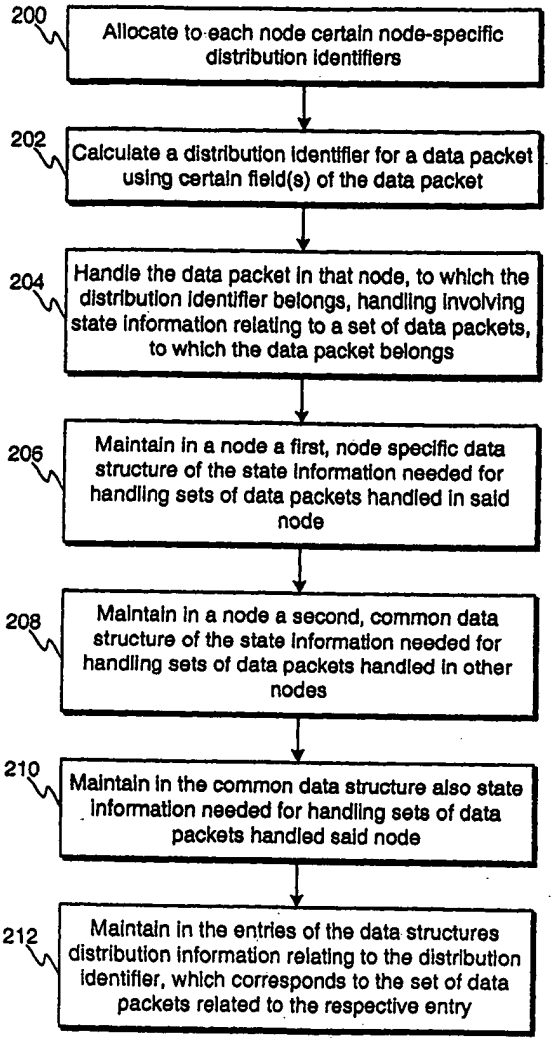

Fig. 2

Fig. 7 of Syvanne illustrates the network element node, and Fig. 8 illustrates a network element cluster.

In no case is there disclosed a teaching or suggestion of:

> ...at least one special purpose cluster node providing special packet processing functionality in the cluster router;...
>
> ...a provisioned router-cluster-node centric configuration distributed to each router cluster

> node for operating in accordance therewith in effecting distributed routing of the conveyed packets,
>
> employing the at least one special purpose router cluster node to provide a reduction in the development, validation, deployment and reconfiguration of the cluster router

as recited in claim 1.

In Fig. 8 of Syvanne, the network element cluster comprises a plurality of network element nodes such as shown in Fig. 7 and which are provided with the capability of communicating with one another. None of the element nodes 700a, 700b, 700c, etc. is the same as or equivalent to applicant's: "at least special purpose cluster node providing special packet processing functionality in the cluster router." Nor is there shown in Figs. 7 or 8 or any of the flow charts of Syvanne a "provisioned router-cluster-node-centric configuration distributed to each router cluster node for operating in accordance therewith in effecting distributed routing of the conveyed packets" as also recited in applicant's claim 1.

Claim 17 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 20 and distinguishes over the Syvanne reference in reciting:

> c. a router-cluster-node-centric configuration to effect distributed routing of the conveyed packets, and
> d. wherein each router cluster node comprises a personal computer platform providing flexibility and cost savings in the development, deployment, maintenance, and expandability of the cluster router.

The claims dependent from claim 17 are patentable over the art for the same reason.

There is no mention in Syvanne of: "each router cluster node comprises a personal computer platform." In fact, there is no mention in Syvanne of personal computers at all.

Independent claim 26 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 27 and distinguishes over the Syvanne reference in requiring:

> b. at least one router-cluster-node-centric packet processing flow, via the plurality of routing functional blocks, to effect routing of packets received at the cluster router employing one of a single router cluster node and a group of router cluster nodes;
> c. an entry-and-routing processing packet processing flow specification;
> d. a transit packet processing flow specification; and
> e. an exit packet processing packet processing flow specification,
>
> the packet processing flow specifications enabling a received packet to undergo entry and routing processing at an entry router cluster node, optionally transit via at least one intermediary router cluster node, and undergo exit processing at an exit router cluster node.

No such teaching or equivalent thereof is found in Syvanne.

The rejection of claims 5, 6, 11 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Syvanne further in view of Wirth et al (US 7.170,895) (hereinafter Wirth) is respectfully traversed. Syvanne has been shown to not be anticipatory of the independent claims, and it follows that dependent claims in the application are patentable for the reason given above; and hence the combination of Syvanne and Wirth does not teach the invention defined by claims 5, 6, 11 and 21.

The rejection of claims 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Syvanne and further in view of Dinker et al (US 7,239,605) (hereinafter Dinker) is respectfully traversed. As shown above, Syvanne does not disclose, teach or suggest the invention defined in parent claim 1; and hence does not teach or suggest the invention defined in dependent claims 8 and 9.

The rejection of claims 10 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Syvanne and further in view of Colrain et al (US 7,069,317) (hereinafter Colrain) is respectfully traversed. As shown above, Syvanne does not disclose, teach or suggest the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 17; and hence does not teach or suggest the combination proposed by the Examiner.

In view of the above, further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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